



Embassy of the
United States of America



Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional
Integration and International Trade

5TH TIFA COUNCIL MEETING

MAURITIUS

JANUARY 16-17, 2012

MEDIA KIT

What is TIFA?

Trade and Investment Framework Agreements (TIFAs) provide strategic frameworks and principles for dialogue on trade and investment issues between the United States and the other parties to the TIFA. These agreements all serve as a forum for the United States and other governments to meet and discuss issues of mutual interest with the objective of improving cooperation and enhancing opportunities for trade and investment.

The United States and TIFA partners consult on a wide range of issues related to trade and investment. Topics for consultation and possible further cooperation include market access issues, labor, the environment, protection and enforcement of intellectual property rights, and, in appropriate cases, capacity building.

The United States has about fifty TIFA agreements with other countries, including a dozen African countries (e.g. Mauritius, South Africa, Liberia & Ghana) and regional African blocs such as the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) and the East African Community.

Background of U.S. – Mauritius TIFA

In September 2006, the United States and Mauritius signed a Trade and Investment Framework Agreement (TIFA) aimed at strengthening and expanding trade and investment ties between the United States and Mauritius. The TIFA provides a formal mechanism to address bilateral trade issues and helps enhance trade and investment relations between the United States and Mauritius. The TIFA encourages new trade and investment opportunities in both countries by establishing a cooperative forum for implementing specific strategies to enhance the U.S.-Mauritius trade and investment relationship.

Created by the TIFA, the United States-Mauritius Council on Trade and Investment (TIFA Council) addresses a wide range of trade and investment issues that include, but are not limited to, trade capacity building, intellectual property, labor, environmental issues, and enhancing the participation of small and medium-sized enterprises in trade and investment. The TIFA Council facilitates an ongoing dialogue that is helping to increase commercial and investment opportunities by identifying and working to remove impediments to trade and investment flows between the United States and Mauritius.

Mauritius hosted the third TIFA Council Meeting in 2009, which was led by Assistant U.S. Trade Representative for Africa, Florizelle Liser. Besides the TIFA meetings, the two countries hold, on a regular basis, Digital Video Conferences (DVC) to discuss TIFA issues of mutual interest in greater depth. The last DVC was held in November 2011 and focused on the information and communication technology sector.

As a result of work under the TIFA, Mauritian firms have participated in a variety of U.S. trade shows (Fancy Foods Show, Magic Apparel Sourcing Show and Super Floral show), resulting in millions of dollars in new trade deals. TIFA has also significantly enhanced cooperation between Mauritius and U.S. trade agencies on topics such as trade promotion, sanitary and phytosanitary issues, and trade-related infrastructure.

What are TIFA Council Meetings?

TIFA Councils normally meet at least once a year at senior levels of government. Four meetings at senior levels have taken place to date, and the upcoming one will be the fifth TIFA Council meeting. The agenda of these meetings encompasses multiple objectives and strategies to support, facilitate and improve Mauritius-US trade and investment relations.

U.S-Mauritius Trade

According to Mauritius' Central Statistical Office, total two-way trade between Mauritius and the United States was valued at \$307 million in 2010, a 27 percent increase from 2009 due primarily to an increase in Mauritian exports. Mauritian exports to the U.S. amounted to \$198 million in 2010, while imports from the U.S. reached \$109 million. Leading Mauritian exports to the United States include textile and apparel, precious stones and jewelry, live animals, prepared fish, medical/surgical instruments, and leather products. In 2010, the leading U.S. exports to Mauritius include silicones/articles of plastics, medical equipment, precious stones, aircraft parts, communication equipment, and agricultural machinery.

TIFA Council Meeting - U.S. Delegation

Ambassador Demetrios Marantis

Deputy United States Trade Representative (USTR)

Demetrios Marantis serves as Deputy USTR. He is responsible for U.S. trade negotiations and enforcement in Asia and Africa. He also leads USTR global initiatives on trade and development, labor, and the environment.



Demetrios Marantis recently served as Chief International Trade Counsel (Majority) for the Senate Finance Committee. In this capacity, he advised Finance Committee Chairman Max Baucus (D - MT), as well as members and staff of the Finance Committee and Democratic Caucus, on trade and economic issues.

Mr. Marantis joined the committee in February of 2005 after serving as Issues Director on the Kerry-Edwards 2004 presidential campaign. Prior to the campaign, Mr. Marantis spent two years in Hanoi as Chief Legal Advisor for the U.S.-Vietnam Trade Council where he provided technical assistance on international trade matters.

Between 1998 and 2002, Mr. Marantis served as Associate General Counsel in the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative where he negotiated provisions of international trade agreements - including the U.S.-Singapore and U.S. Chile Free Trade Agreements - and represented the United States in WTO dispute settlement proceedings, including the U.S.-Mexico dispute on telecommunications. He holds a J.D. from Harvard Law School and an A.B. in Public and International Affairs from Princeton University.

Florizelle Liser

Assistant U.S. Trade Representative for Africa

Florizelle (Florie) Liser is the Assistant U.S. Trade Representative for Africa in the Office of the United States Trade Representative (USTR). In this position, she leads U.S. trade efforts and investment in sub-Saharan Africa and oversees implementation of the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA). She also leads interagency negotiation and implementation of a number of trade and investment agreements with Sub-Saharan African nations.



Ms. Liser has an extensive background in trade negotiations and Africa. From 2000-2003, she served as Assistant U.S. Trade Representative for Industry, Market Access, and Telecommunications. In that position, she was responsible for developing and coordinating U.S. trade policy as it affects industrial and manufacturing interests - including telecommunications, electronic commerce, steel, chemicals, forest products, semiconductors, aircraft, and shipbuilding, among others. She also coordinated industrial market access negotiations in bilateral and regional free trade agreements and in the WTO.

From 1980 to 1987, Ms. Liser worked in the USTR GATT Affairs office on WTO developing country trade issues, including the Committees on Trade and Development, Least Developed Countries, and Balance-of-Payments. Ms. Liser was a founding member of TransAfrica (participating in the early planning sessions for its national launch), former co-chair of the Education Committee of the Washington, DC Chapter of TransAfrica, and has over many years been actively involved in promoting trade and development policies that recognize Africa's growing importance to the U.S. and its African-American citizens.

Ms. Liser holds a M.A. in International Economics from Johns Hopkins University, School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS), and a B.A. in International Relations and Political Science from Dickinson College.

Other members of the delegation:

Jillian DeLuna – Program Analyst, Department of State

Nile Johnson – Trade and Investment Officer, Department of State

Matthew Rees – Regional Trade Adviser, Regional Economic Growth & Integration Office, USAID/East Africa

TIFA Council Meeting – Representatives of the Government of the Republic of Mauritius

Dr. Arvin Boolell

Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade



Anund Neewoor

Secretary for Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade

Assad Bhuglah

Director of Trade Policy, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade

TIFA Council Meeting – Agenda Open to Press
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Monday, January 16, 2012:

- U.S.-Mauritius TIFA Council Meeting Opening Ceremony
InterContinental Hotel, Balaclava
- Joint media briefing on USA-Mauritius bilateral trade relations Q&A
InterContinental Hotel, Balaclava

Tuesday, January 17, 2012:

- Address on Trade by Ambassador Marantis (Speech with Q & A)
hosted by the Mauritius Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI)
- Visit to Ceridian (ICT/BPO Company), Ebene

Note to media: Times for these events will be communicated through formal press advisories at a later stage.

For additional information, please contact the U.S. Embassy Public Affairs Office – 2024442 or the MFA Adviser on Information Matters – 4052687